Guest Blog: Ten Tors 2014

Description

Ten Tors 2014 begins this evening and the Met Office, as part of its Public Weather Service will be providing specific forecasts for the event throughout the course of the weekend to organisers as well as to members of the public through the events pages on the website.

Here Ronnie Jones, from the South West Army Press Office explains a bit more about the event:

The Army, which runs the Ten Tors challenge, relies heavily on The Met Office for its dedicated weather forecasts which are specifically created for the event. Ten Tors is called a challenge for a reason and the weather often plays a leading role in making it so tough for the teams of teenagers trekking 35, 45 or 55 miles over some of the highest peaks in southern England, and navigating by themselves across the emptiness of one of the last true wildernesses in Britain.

This year the weather is already playing a big part in Ten Tors, and the challenge hasn't even begun! Unfortunately several days of rain have made the usual car park on the site at Okehampton Camp unusable.

Brigadier Piers Hankinson, Director of the Ten Tors explains why:

"I have conducted a further assessment of the condition of the car parks. Unfortunately the state of the ground has deteriorated severely as a result of the poor weather conditions today.

"While I am still content that I will be able to get all team vehicles into the car park, the condition of the ground has made it impossible for us to accept spectators' cars on Saturday. Only team vehicles will be admitted into Okehampton Camp.

"I have arranged for a Park and Ride system to be operated from Okehampton College but be aware that the parking is very limited at 200 cars. Please consider the lack of available parking when planning your journeys and share vehicles where possible."

The weather is set to play a further part as we head into the weekend, with the Met Office warning of gale force winds for parts of South West England and forecasting heavy showers throughout Saturday.

For up-to-date weather forecasts over the course of the event you can visit the Met Office's Ten Tors events page and more information on the event itself can be found on the official Ten Tors website.

Date Created
May 2014

End personal attacks on scientists – regardless of their views

Description

The Met Office's Chief Scientist, Professor Dame Julia Slingo, is appealing for an end to personal attacks on scientists – no matter what their viewpoint on the climate debate.

Her call follows recent articles in the media claiming that some scientists have felt pressured due to their views.

Professor Lennart Bengtsson, a research fellow at the University of Reading, featured in the articles after saying he was worried by a wider trend that science is being 'gradually influenced by political views'. You can read a statement from him and other climate scientists in response to the articles on the Science Media Centre's website.

In a letter, published in The Times today, Professor Dame Slingo says scientists should be free to review and debate their research without fear of personal attacks.

You can read the full letter below:

Sir

Your articles on the recent events surrounding Prof. Lennart Bengtsson are not a true reflection of the way the climate community conducts its research. My position, and my passion, is that all scientists – no matter what their viewpoint – must be free to review and debate their research unfettered and without personal attacks.

Science is about seeking the truth and acknowledging the uncertainties in what we currently know; it cannot be about subjective, unscientific beliefs and personal attacks of the kind that some of us have had to endure.

Just as we are very clear that climate models do not give us a definitive answer about the possible magnitude of future warming, neither do the estimates from observations as some in the climate sceptic community would claim.

I welcome scientific debate with those whose research challenges my understanding of climate change and scientists have a well established and robust peer review process for doing this. This process is there for good reason because it ensures the debate is rigorous but never personal.

Professor Dame Julia Slingo
Chief Scientist
Met Office

Date Created
May 2014

Balkan flooding

Description

Over 100mm of rainfall was recorded over Bosnia and Serbia during Wednesday and Thursday last week (14th & 15th May 2014), with media reports of much higher rainfall accumulations in places.

The heavy rainfall was caused by a slow moving area of low pressure through the whole depth of the atmosphere

The subsequent flooding was reported to be the worst in 120 years in Bosnia since records began in 1894. A state of emergency has been declared in 18 towns and cities, including Belgrade. The Serbian Prime Minister declared this the greatest flooding disaster ever, with more than four months worth of rain falling on one day. Rivers across the region are now believed to be at record levels.

The system that caused the heavy rainfall has now moved away eastwards with predominately dry weather expected for the rest of this week. Temperatures are expected to be close to normal for the time of year with relatively light winds. However the longer range forecast shows the potential for further heavy rainfall next week.

There have been reports in the media that the flooding has sparked a mass evacuation with fears that flooding and mudslides could expose landmines left by the Bosnian war.

River gauges show many of the rivers have peaked, but despite the dry forecast for the next few days there are concerns (from local hydromet departments) that river levels may rise again on Tuesday evening (20th May) and Wednesday morning(21st May) on the River Sava and River Danube. Further flooding could threaten a major power station on the River Sava.

Date Created
May 2014

Met Office predicts below average Atlantic hurricane season

Description

The Met Office Atlantic tropical storm forecast for 2014 is for 10 tropical storms between June and November, with a 70% chance that the number will be in the range 7 to 13. The long-term average over the period 1980–2010 is 12 tropical storms.

Specifically for hurricanes (storms with winds of at least 74 mph) the best estimate is 6, with a 70% chance that the number will be in the range 3 to 9; the 1980–2010 average is 6 hurricanes.

The most likely value for the Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE) index — a measure of the strength and duration of storms over the season — is 84, with a 70% chance that the index will be in the range 47 to 121; the 1980–2010 average ACE index is 104.

An image of Hurricane Sandy taken on October 28, 2012. CREDIT: NOAA/NASA GOES Project.

The evolution of the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) over the next few months will likely play a large part in the North Atlantic hurricane season.

Joanne Camp, climate scientist at the Met Office, said: “El Niño conditions in the Pacific can hinder the development of tropical storms in the Atlantic whereas La Niña conditions can enhance tropical storm activity, so how these conditions develop will be important for the storm season ahead.”

Current evidence from observations and forecast models indicates a 70% chance of an El Niño event developing this year, with thresholds likely to be reached by the peak of the hurricane season. This is no guarantee, however, that El Niño conditions will occur.

The tropical storm forecast is produced using the Met Office’s new seasonal prediction system GloSea5.

It has higher resolution than its predecessor, with better representation of the complex physical

processes that cause tropical storm and hurricane development.

The forecast also uses information from the seasonal prediction system of the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF).

For regular updates on tropical cyclones worldwide follow @metofficestorms on Twitter.

Date Created
May 2014

Rain over the Bank Holiday Weekend, with more to come

Description

The Bank Holiday weekend saw a good deal of dry and bright weather in places, but there was also heavy rainfall in some spots over the three days with some significant rainfall totals.

Much of England and Wales had a wet Saturday as rain pushed northwestwards with heavy, and thundery showers following.

Sunday brought heavy showery rain to western and northern parts of the UK, with 25 mm of rain falling in three hours around the Edinburgh area.

Heavy rain pushed in from the southeast on Bank Holiday Monday, whilst to the west and north of this there was some sunny weather, but also heavy and thundery showers for Cornwall, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Here are the highest UK rainfall totals for each of the three days of the Bank Holiday:

Rainfall totals from 0900 Saturday 24 May – 0900 Sunday 25 May

Site	Area	Amount (mm)
Liscombe	Somerset	32.2
Usk	Monmouthshire	29.0
Tredegar	Gwent	23.4
Okehampton	Devon	22.5
Waddington	Lincolnshire	22.0
Sheffield	South Yorkshire	22.0

Rainfall totals from 0900 Sunday 25 May – 0900 Monday 26 May

Site	Area	Amount (mm)
Edinburgh, Gogarbank	Midlothian	26.2
Cardinham	Cornwall	17.8
Edinburgh, Royal Botanic Garden	Midlothian	17.4
Tyndrum	Perthshire	17.2
Camborne	Cornwall	14.2

Rainfall totals from 0900 Monday 26 May – 0900 Tuesday 27 May

Site	Area	Amount (mm)
Wattisham	Suffolk	31.2
Brooms Barn	Suffolk	25.4
Cavendish	Suffolk	21.8
Charsfield	Suffolk	19.2
Cambridge	Cambridgeshire	17.0

Looking ahead through the rest of this week there is more rain to come, particularly for eastern and northeastern England, while Scotland (especially the north) has the best of the warm, sunny weather.

Suffolk has already seen heavy rainfall through Tuesday morning with over 30 mm of rainfall at Wattisham through the first 9 hours of the day.

This is going to push northwards through Tuesday into Norfolk and Lincolnshire. A Met Office yellow warning has been issued to warn of rainfall amounts reaching around 30mm in some spots which could lead to some localised flooding.

There are also going to be some heavy showers over southern parts of Wales and parts of the West Country.

Wednesday will again be wet for many, especially around northeast England with parts of Yorkshire at risk of over 30 mm, for which another yellow rainfall warning has been issued. With strengthening winds this will make it feel quite unpleasant at times.

More showers or longer spells of rain are expected for Thursday, before things should turn generally drier, brighter and warmer by the weekend.

Date Created
May 2014

Early figures suggest third warmest spring on record

Description

Early statistics from the Met Office National Climate Information Centre show that this has been one of the warmest springs in records dating back to 1910.

Based on figures up until 28 May and then assuming average conditions to the end of the month, the mean temperature for the UK for the season is 8.97 °C, third warmest in the records (beaten by 2007 with 9.05 °C and 2011 with 9.15 °C).

Looking at specific countries, it is currently the third warmest spring for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

However, it has been particularly warm in Scotland compared to average. Depending on temperatures in the final three days of May, this spring could be Scotland's warmest since records began with a current mean temperature of 7.63 °C, just above the record set in 2011 of 7.61 °C.

Each of the three months of spring have seen above average temperatures. The figures for May up to the 28th of the month show it has been 0.8 °C above the long-term average for the UK.

This continues a run of six months where the UK mean temperature was warmer than average, with all the months from December through to April each being at least 1 °C warmer than the long-term average.

Apart from the above average temperatures, statistics for May otherwise show it has been duller and wetter than average so far.

Sunshine is down compared to the long-term average, with the UK having seen 141.8 hours which is 76% of what we would normally expect.

Scotland and Northern Ireland have seen particularly low levels of sun – Scotland has seen 103.8 hours which is 58% of the average, and Northern Ireland has seen just 51% of its average with 92.9 hours.

Rainfall statistics for May show that it has been a wet month so far, with the UK having seen 97.7mm of rain which is 140% of the long-term average.

When it comes to rainfall for spring overall, it has been only slightly wetter than average. The figures show that spring is about 7% wetter than the long-term average.

Northern Ireland actually had a slightly drier spring, with only 91.8% of the average rainfall.

Mean Temperature **Rainfall**

Spring*	Actual	Diff from Avg	Actual	% of Avg
	degC	degC	mm	%
UK	8.97	1.23	255.1	107
England	9.76	1.24	201	111
Wales	9.04	1.03	295.5	101
Scotland	7.63	1.3	339.8	107
N Ireland	9	1.12	222.7	92

*Please note these are projected numbers that include statistics from 1 March to 28 May, then assume average conditions for the final few days of the season. They may not accurately represent the final full-season figures.

	Mean Temperature		Sunshine hours		Rainfall	
May**	Actual	Diff from Avg	Actual	% of Avg	Actual	% of Avg
	degC	degC	hours	%	mm	%
UK	11.1	0.8	141.8	76	97.7	140
England	12	0.8	170.6	90	91.1	156
Wales	11.1	0.5	138	74	124.2	145
Scotland	9.7	0.9	103.8	58	102.9	122
N Ireland	11.2	1	92.9	51	90.1	124

** Please note these are preliminary statistics from 1-28 May. The final figures will change once statistics from the final few days of the month are included.

Date Created
May 2014